

Request for Proposals for Fiscal Year 2020

Clean Water Act Section 319(h) Grants

(The date for Section 319 (h) grant applications to be submitted to NC DEQ has been extended to June 4, 2020)

The North Carolina Division of Water Resources (DWR) is seeking proposals for award of federal fiscal year 2020 319(h) grant funds to implement watershed restoration plans that will help restore waters impaired by nonpoint sources of pollution. For FY 2020, North Carolina expects to receive **\$1.3 Million** from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for competitive funding of watershed restoration projects under Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act.

Application Information

Eligible Applicants

- State and local governments (including Councils of Government)
- Interstate and intrastate agencies
- Public and private nonprofit organizations and institutions (including academic institutions)

How to Apply

The 319 grant application form and further information on the program can be found on the 319 [website](#). All applications must be submitted in electronic format as a Word document.

DWR will accept applications for FY2020 319 funding until **June 4, 2020 (Extended)**. Applicants may also submit a draft application no later than March 15, 2020 to obtain preliminary review and comments from DWR staff. Final applications shall be received by DWR no later than midnight June 4, 2020 (email to rishi.bastakoti@ncdenr.gov). Proposals received after this time will not be accepted.

Proposals will be reviewed by DWR staff and a Nonpoint Source Workgroup based on criteria listed on the 319 website. Selected projects will then be contracted at the time that DEQ receives its grant award from the US EPA.

Conditions for Funding Eligibility

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), DWR is seeking proposals **only** for projects that **implement a DWR-approved watershed restoration plan** to restore **impaired waters** impacted by nonpoint source (NPS) pollution.

Impaired waters are those either determined by DWR as such, or those for which other approved monitoring entities' data shows exceedance of a water quality standard for a given pollutant. DWR-impaired waters are those listed as either Category 4 or 5 in the most recent Integrated Report published by the [DWR Modeling and Assessment Branch](#) (see link for Integrated Report Files). Projects funded through the 319 Grant must be used to implement a DWR-approved Watershed Restoration Plan that includes the nine elements required by the EPA. When proposing a project, please reference the list of approved watershed plans on the [319 Grant Program website](#).

If you wish to implement a watershed restoration plan that is not on this list, you are required to submit your plan and [North Carolina 9-Element Plan Checklist](#) to rishi.bastakoti@ncdenr.gov by March 15, 2020. Division staff will then review the plan and determine whether it meets the nine elements. Further guidance on developing watershed plans is also available on the 319 Grant Program website.

Emphasis on Measurable Results

Both the U.S. EPA and North Carolina Division of Water Resources place a strong emphasis on achieving “measurable results” for projects selected to receive 319 Grant funding. To that end, projects should be sited as close to the impaired reach as possible to best target identified sources of water quality degradation. In addition, proposals involving on-the-ground implementation shall provide documentation assuring sustainable operation and maintenance measures for at least five years.

Project type	Recommended Estimation Methods
Stormwater control measures designed to Minimum Design Criteria	EPA STEPL Tool Stormwater Nitrogen and Phosphorus (SNAP) Tool (formerly Jordan-Falls Stormwater Nutrient Load Accounting Tool)
Agricultural BMPs	NCANAT RUSLE2
Stream restoration	Various

The EPA requires that projects designed to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment estimate the load reductions resulting from these projects. The 319 Grant Program recommends the following estimation methods:

Monitoring Requirements

319 proposals shall address an instream evaluation of project effectiveness. To maximize use of 319 project funds for on-ground implementation, DWR encourages practitioners to rely on and report relevant instream data produced by our, or other state-approved monitoring entities' existing monitoring programs to provide this instream evaluation of project effectiveness. The 9-element plan on which a 319 proposal is based is required to address the effectiveness evaluation, and the 319 proposal should reflect that plan. Thus, 319 proposals are not required to provide instream monitoring, but the 319 program strongly encourages siting projects above and close to existing monitoring locations in order to maximize potential for measurable gain. It should also be noted that some types of projects call for monitoring of site runoff¹.

All projects that propose a monitoring component must also submit a Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs). QAPPs for selected projects must be reviewed and approved by DWR prior to the release of funds for monitoring activities; project budgets and timelines should account for the development and review of QAPPs accordingly.

DWR [QAPP Template](#)

Use Support QAPPs are those that propose monitoring intended to inform DWR's impairment ratings for state waterbodies. Applicants seeking to write Use Support QAPPs should contact the 319 program for additional technical guidance.

Example - [Hunting Creek Project QAPP](#) (DWQ Non-Use Support)

Example - [Lockwood Folly Project QAPP](#) (DWQ Use Support)

[EPA guidance for QAPPs](#)

Photo-Documentation

In addition, all funded projects should submit "before" and "after" photos in final reports to visually document changes due to project implementation, for instance of stream appearance after a rainstorm shown before and after project implementation, or stream pre- and post- fencing out livestock.

¹ Stormwater control measures not designed to the Minimum Design Criteria (see state [Stormwater Design Manual](#)) should submit a monitoring plan as part of their 319 application.

Certain Regulatory Compliance Activities Ineligible

Activities **specifically** required by a draft or final NPDES permit, MS4 permit, Phase I and Phase II stormwater program requirement are ineligible. Eligible activities include aspects of Phase I and II programs that support but do not directly implement activities specifically required by Phase I or Phase II permits. Some eligible stormwater activities include best management practices for pollution prevention and runoff control not specifically required by a draft or final NPDES permit and stormwater projects occurring outside of the NPDES permit area. The 319 Grant will not fund a stream, wetland, or buffer restoration that is a compensatory mitigation requirement or any activities relating to compensatory mitigation; see Federal Register 33 CFR 325 for additional definitions of such work.

Funding Availability

Contingent upon Congressional appropriation, funding for selected projects will be provided by federal fiscal year 2020 Clean Water Act Section 319(h) grant funds. For planning purposes, we anticipate **\$1.3 Million** from the USEPA for competitive funding of watershed restoration projects for FY20. There is no maximum cap on the amount of funding that a project can apply for; however, we recommend that you make your project as cost-effective as possible. The majority of funded projects typically fall in a range from approximately \$50,000 to \$300,000.

Matching and Other Requirements

All projects must include non-federal matching funds of at least 40% of the project's total costs (i.e. match funds are at least 40/60 or 2/3 of the 319 award amount). Note that providing more than the minimum 40% match is encouraged and adds weight in the review process.

All project match must: (1) relate directly to the project for which the match is being applied; (2) be reasonably valued; and (3) be supported by documentation. Match cannot come from federal funds or from funds already being used as a match for other federal grants. Match is an indicator of local commitment to a project and is considered in proposal eligibility and ranking. Match may include: (1) Cash Match (Cash contributed specifically to cover the actual cost of the project); (2) In-Kind Match (Contributions made directly in the form of services, resources or goods with dollar value specified to implement the project. Some examples of In-Kind Match services: Personnel/staff salaries and fringe benefits, professional fees, labor, supplies and materials, equipment, office/meeting space rent, office utilities, volunteer hours, structural design, outreach products and events, publications, indirect charges, public land conservation etc.)

Applicants are also encouraged to identify other state funding sources for work that contributes to watershed improvement, and to partner with other state or local agencies,

or with parties funded by those agencies, to leverage such funding or relationships to best effect for water quality improvement. Partnerships demonstrate a commitment from the community that projects will be maintained and have community buy in. Potential funding partners include the [Clean Water Management Trust Fund](#), North Carolina [Division of Mitigation Services](#), local Soil and Water Conservation District offices, or other state or federal NPS programs. See also a fairly [comprehensive list](#) of other watershed funding sources.

Project Administration

As part of developing and finalizing a grant agreement for a selected project, DWR may request the applicant to modify the project scope of work based on comments received during project evaluations and the selection process. The grant recipient must enter into an agreement with the NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) to establish mutually agreeable terms for completing the project. Payment will be made on a reimbursement basis in accordance with the payment schedule and terms contained in the project agreement. Reimbursement is tied to performance targets. Grant recipients will be required to provide quarterly progress reports to DWR. Projects are expected to be completed in the timeframe of the grant agreement. Time extension will not be granted without specific and appropriate justification, approved in advance. The 319 grant cannot reimburse for project work done outside the term or scope of the grant agreement, including prior to full approval of a grant agreement.

Deadlines and Administration

The schedule for reviewing and funding FY 2020 proposals is as follows:

January 31, 2020	Request for proposals (RFP) is released
March 15, 2020	Deadline for draft proposals or 9-Element Plans seeking preliminary staff review
June 4, 2020 (Extended)	Deadline for final proposals; must be received electronically by midnight
June 29, 2020	Applicants notified whether they will be invited for interviews
July 28, 2020	Interviews for finalists
August, 4 2020	DWR announces selected projects. Move forward with contracting, dependent upon receipt of EPA grant funding to North Carolina.
January 2021	Contracts executed, projects may start. (Estimated, depending on grant award date to NCDEQ and time for contract preparation.)

Still Have Questions?

Please contact Rishi Bastakoti at rishi.bastakoti@ncdenr.gov. For information on required reporting if your project is selected for funding, see the [319 Grant Program website](#) for quarterly report and invoice templates and final report guidelines.